DAVID GRIES

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

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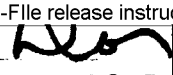INTERNATIONAL
SECURITY AFFAIRS

5 February 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. DAVID GRIES, CIA

SUBJECT: Mid-Level Defense-Led PW/MIA Mission to Vietnam
and Laos

- A State/Defense proposal to send a Defense-led PW/MIA mission to Hanoi and Vientiane to press for cooperation on PW/MIA accounting was approved by the President in September 1981.

  -- In November 1981, a joint State/Defense team made the proposal to the Vietnamese UN Ambassador in New York. The Lao Charge' here in Washington was given a similar demarche. Concurrently, congressional leaders and key friends and allies were briefed on the proposal.

  -- The Lao declined our proposal shortly after it was made. Our subsequent request for reconsideration has not been answered. However, indications are it will also be rejected.

  -- The Vietnamese accepted on January 19th and a February 23-24 date for the visit was subsequently agreed upon.

- The mission will be headed by the DOD representative, Richard L. Armitage, DASD, EAPA. He will be accompanied by staff representatives from State, DOD, and JCS. Its mandate is to discuss only the PW/MIA issue.

- The delegation has a charter to only address the PW/MIA issue The Vietnamese have been told this but they will undoubtedly attempt to use the forum for a political advantage. It was hoped that Laos would reconsider the decision to see the delegation but, to date, that has not occurred.

- We have briefed our friends and allies on the trip, assuring them that the PW/MIA issue is the only topic and it should not be interpreted as having any other motive. The recipients have understood this position and Bangkok has asked for an early debrief.

- The delegation should return to Washington by February 27, 1982.

NOT REFERRED TO OSD. ON-File release instructions apply.

Donald S. Jones
Rear Admiral, USN
Director, East Asia
and Pacific Region